

**Remarks**

Claims 1-20 are pending.

**The Restriction Requirement**

In the Office Action, restriction is required to one of the following groups of invention:

- I) Claims 1-3 drawn to a method of enhancing the ability of a genotype 2b NS5B sequence to function in a replicon;
- II) Claims 4-6 drawn to a method of producing a chimeric replicon;
- III) Claims 7-14 and 16-20 drawn to a chimeric replicon and recombinant cell comprising the replicon; and
- IV) Claim 15, drawn to a method for measuring the ability of a compound to inhibit the replicon activity.

In order to be fully responsive, Applicants elect, with traverse, Group III (claims 7-14 and 16-20), to prosecute in the present application without prejudice to prosecution of the subject matter of the non-elected groups in subsequent applications.

**Conclusion**

It is believed that the claims now pending are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action by the Examiner is earnestly requested.

**Authorization**

No fee is believed to be due. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to deposit account 13-2755.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: September 15, 2011 By: /Melissa B. Wenk Reg. No. 53,759/  
Melissa B. Wenk  
Reg. No. 53,759  
Attorney for Applicants

Correspondence Address:  
Merck & Co., Inc.  
P.O. Box 2000  
Rahway, NJ 07065-0907  
(732) 594-2756 Telephone  
(732) 594-7790 Facsimile